



Attendance Policy

*Learning, striving, excelling
Guided by faith...*

Reviewed annually
Last review: November 2017

At Miserden C of E Primary School it is recognised that the responsibility for promoting good attendance and punctuality is shared by all staff, governors, parents and carers and the pupil. As a school we aim to maintain a minimum attendance rate of 95% and maintain parents and pupils' awareness of the importance of regular attendance.

This policy promotes our Christian Values of **Respect, Trust and Service**

This policy has been produced following advice from the Local Authority (LA).

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance.
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically.
- Regular attenders find school routines and school work easier to cope with.
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying.
- Regular attenders have an easier transfer to secondary school

Parental responsibility

Parents and carers should:

- Advise school of any planned absence using the Notification of Absence Form (Appendix 1).
- Ring school on the first morning of every absence to state the reason for the absence and the date the child is expected to return to school.
- Send a note into school to explain the reason for the absence when the child returns to school.
- Keep school updated by telephone or letter if the child has an extended period of absence due to illness.
- Make sure their children attend school regularly and on time, appropriately dressed and equipped and in a fit state to learn.
- Let the school know if they are having difficulty with attendance so that any available help or support can be offered.
- Arrange medical and dental appointments out of school hours, or during school breaks.
- Understand that there is no entitlement for parents to take pupils on holiday during term time and that holidays within term time are not an automatic right.
- Ensure that their children arrive in school on time. It is important to be on time, as the first few minutes of the school day are often used to give out instructions, organise schoolwork or for children to use this as work improvement time. If your child misses this short but vital session, his/her work for the whole day may be affected. Late arrivals disrupt the whole class and the late child is often embarrassed to arrive late.

If your child arrives after registration it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and could lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued. (A Fixed Penalty Notice Leaflet is held in the school office and will be issued to parents on request or as required)

Schools responsibility:

The school shall

- Follow up unexplained absences with phone calls on the first day of absence.
- Keep and mark registers accurately.
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters, on the school website and in the Home-School agreement.
- Acknowledge and reward good attendance.
- Publish each child's attendance rate on his/her annual school report.
- Let parents know if they have concerns regarding a child's attendance and offer support and advice.

Where there is concern over non- attendance or persistent late attendance the school will:

- Investigated the reasons for absence
- Meet with parent(s) – preferably by home visit and offer support.
- Warn parents in writing at the outset of the possibility of prosecution
- Implement strategies to improve attendance, and provide evidence of this
- Hold a formal Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM) with parent and child to draw up a plan to support attendance.

If poor attendance continues following intervention/support a referral will be made to the LA's Education Entitlement and Inclusion team who will consider taking legal action under the s444(1) of the 1996 Education Act.

The Head teacher will

- Ensure that everybody at school treats attendance as a priority.
- Promote the importance of good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers and celebrate good attendance with pupils.
- Be available to discuss attendance concerns with pupils, parents, staff and governors.
- Remind parents at least annually of attendance procedures.
- Analyse attendance data, share relevant percentages and address any priority areas.
- Oversee attendance procedures and follow the Local Authorities good practice.

The Governors will:

- Monitor, evaluate and review the attendance procedures regularly with the Head teacher.

School times

8.40 a.m. Children are welcomed into classrooms with a soft start to the day, where they will complete tasks set by the teacher

8.50 a.m. Morning registration takes place.
8.55 a.m. Register Close
12.15p.m. Lunchtime.
1.15 p.m. Lunchtime ends for all pupils and afternoon registration takes place.
3.15 p.m. School ends for all pupils

Children should be collected promptly unless they are attending an after-school activity. In the unlikely event that a child is not collected at the end of the school day, we will endeavour to contact parents/carers or any of the given emergency contacts, however despite every effort being made, contact is not be possible, the duty social worker from the Children and Families team will be contacted.

Registration

The School must keep attendance registers for all pupils on the school roll. The class teacher will call the register twice a day and every pupil will be marked as present, absent or engaged in an approved educational activity away from the school site. It must be shown, by the use of approved codes, whether an absence is authorised or not.

- Registration will take place between 8.50 a.m. and 8.55 a.m. for the morning session and between 1.15 -1.20pm for the afternoon session.
- Pupils arriving during registration will be marked with an L (late), which denotes that the pupil is present.

Registration will close 20 minutes after the register has been taken. Unless there is an acceptable reason for the lateness the pupil will be marked with a U, which denotes an unauthorised absence. If a pupil is registered with ten Us in a ten-week period a Fixed Penalty Notice can be issued.

A written warning of this will usually be issued, in the first instance, by the school, together with an information leaflet produced by the LA (Up to date copies of which are held in the office)

- The school has a signing in book which needs to be completed by the parent, carer or child if the child is late arriving to school. This is held in the Office
- The marking of registers will be in accordance with instructions set out at the front of the register.

Absences

Absence, legally, has to be recorded as either authorised or unauthorised and reported on to the Department for Education and, in some circumstances, to the LA. Only school can decide whether an absence is authorised or not, and is not obliged to accept the reasons given by a parent or carer.

Authorised absence is when a pupil

- is absent with the prior permission of the school;
- is too unwell to attend school or is attending a medical or dental appointment;
- is away for a day set aside by their parent's religion for religious observance;
- has suffered a family bereavement;
- has been excluded;

- A child of traveller parents is travelling in connection with the parents' work.

Unauthorised absence is when

- a pupil is absent and no explanation, or an unacceptable explanation, is offered;
- a pupil arrives after the registration period has closed without an acceptable reason;
- a pupil is away from school on a family holiday.

An approved educational activity is not recorded as an absence and will be marked when a pupil is on a school/educational visit, is attending an approved off-site activity or is receiving special off-site tuition.

Appointments

If appointments have to be made during school hours, school should be pre-notified using the notification form. (See appendix 1 Absence Notification Form).

Pupils leaving school mid-session should, for safety reasons, notify the office on departure and re-arrival. This will be recorded by the secretary. If present at registration no amendment to the register is necessary. If absent at registration the register should be marked with an authorised absence mark. Again for safety reasons, pupils should report to the office on arrival. Again this will be recorded by the Secretary.

Frequent absences

Medical reasons

When a pupil frequently misses school for medical reasons the school medical service will be consulted. Where necessary a referral will be made so that an evaluation of the pupil's health and educational needs can be made.

Longer absences

Pupils who have been absent for a long period of time will be welcomed back positively and will be supported to ensure they to catch up with missed work. Friendship groups will be monitored for a period to ensure that the pupil settles back into school life happily.

Term-time holiday

Amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. There is no entitlement to time off in term time and the school can issue a Fixed Penalty Notice if absence is recorded as an unauthorised holiday. A written warning of this will be issued, in the first instance, by the school together with an information leaflet.(A Fixed Penalty Notice Leaflet is held in the school office and will be issued where there is a need or on request, also see appendix 3)

School procedures

School registers are taken on SIMS, the school's Information Management System. Once the registers are closed the school secretary checks the registers for missing marks or unexplained absences.

Where the register shows an unexplained absence and there has been no message received at school by 9.30 a.m. a phone call will be made to the parent/carer to find out the reason for absence and the date of expected return. (Parents/carers will be asked to follow up with a written note on their child's return to school.) All telephone messages will be recorded on SIMS.

If school have been unable to make contact by telephone a written communication will be sent on the 3rd day of absence, requesting the reason for absence. If there is no response a reminder will be sent on the 6th day of absence.

If there is still no response the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and school will refer to the Attendance

Support Officer. If school have been unable to make contact after the 10th school day of absence the Headteacher will report the pupil as a "Child Missing Education" to the LA who will enforce their missing Child Missing Education protocol.

Where the register shows 6 separate late marks either during or after registration over a 6-week period the school will in the first instance will discuss the reasons for the lateness. Should lateness continue a letter will be sent reminding parents of their responsibilities, together with an Attendance information Leaflet (see appendix 2) and an offer of support or opportunity to discuss any specific difficulties.

Any concerns about attendance or punctuality will be referred to the Head teacher who will, if necessary, contact parents/carers to try to resolve any issues and, if appropriate, refer to the Parent Support Advisor or the Attendance Support Officer. If these issues cannot be resolved and there is continued unauthorised absence the matter may be referred ultimately to the Education Entitlement and Exclusion Team at Shire Hall.

Where the register shows 10 separate late after registration marks (U) over the last 10 weeks, the LA may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. (See Fixed Penalty Notice Leaflet held in the school office or appendix 3) A written warning of this will usually be issued, in the first instance, by the school.

The Law

The law says that:

- Parents of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that their children receive suitable full time education;
- LAs must ensure that parents fulfil their legal obligations regarding their children's education; "If a child of compulsory school age, who is registered at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school then the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. There is a risk that if your child's attendance is unsatisfactory a referral may be made to the Local Authority who will start a legal process."
- Maintained schools must allow the LA to inspect their registers;
- Schools must report pupils who fail to attend regularly to the LA. Gloucestershire's Penalty Notice protocol allows schools to notify the LA of any pupil having more than

5 days (10 sessions) of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period particularly when this absence is on account of:

- (a) lateness after registration;
- (b) unauthorised holiday.

In these instances the LA will consider issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice of £60 after a warning has been issued by the school. Unauthorised absence may lead to the LA taking full court action if attendance issues cannot be resolved.

Leavers

If your child is leaving Miserden C of E Primary School, other than to go on to Secondary School, parents/carers are asked to:

- Give the school full information about their plans, including date of move; new address – or at least the town you will be moving to; new school and start date, when known; and reasons for moving (a form is available at the school office).
- Confirm the school has your current mobile phone number.
- Take our school's compliments slip so the new school can easily arrange for records to be transferred.
- Let us know when you move.

Children missing in education

When pupils leave, if parents/carers have not given us the above information, and cannot be contacted, then the child is considered to be a Child Missing Education. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations that include liaising with Children's Services (formerly Social Services), the Police and other agencies, to try to track and locate your child. When parents/carers provide the above information, unnecessary investigations can be avoided.

Strategies

To support our attendance policy we:

- Will treat attendance as a priority;
- Apply timely intervention/support and where necessary, if poor attendance continues, refer to the local authority's Education, Entitlement and Inclusion team who will consider legal sanctions
- Promote good attendance at every opportunity;
- Always contact parents/carers on the first day of their child's absence;
- Reward and celebrate good and improved attendance;
- Set attendance targets for the school and for each year group;
- Keep parents/carers informed of their child's attendance level;
- Make good use of attendance data by specific analysis;
- Notify Governors of attendance levels at each meeting of the full governing body;
- Provide a safe, happy, stimulating environment for children, where they feel valued and welcomed, and that their presence in school is important.

Appendix 1 Leave of Absence Request Form

Appendix 2 School Attendance Information Leaflet

Appendix 3 Fixed Penalty Notice Leaflet (copy)

To be reviewed: November 2018